

REMARKS

This response is intended to be fully responsive to the Official Action mailed March 17, 2006 in the above-referenced application.

Claims 16 and 17 were objected to for failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the phrase "said curved inner edge." Applicant has amended these claims to depend from claim 15 thus correcting the antecedent error.

Claims 1, 5, 6, 12-14, 16 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okumura (US 6,689,944) in view of Ludwig (US 2,517,124). Claims 7, 11, 22 and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okumura '944 in view of Ludwig '124 and Kasha. These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments.

The Examiner indicated that claims 2-4, 8-10, 15-17 and 18-20 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 2. Further, claims 9 and 10 were rewritten into independent form.

Applicant has also amended claim 12 to recite an arrangement where the inner edge (17a, 117a) of at least one of the end members (16a, 16b, 116) is disposed at an angle to the transverse direction of the snare assembly so that the opposite ends of the snare strands are secured to a bottom surface of the at least one of said end members substantially along the angled inner edge thereof in order to continuously graduate said effective lengths of the snare strands in the transverse direction of the snare assembly.

The prior art of record fails to disclose the angled inner edge currently recited in amended claim 12 to continuously graduate the effective length of the snare strands.

In view of the foregoing amendments and arguments, it is respectfully submitted that the present claims are in condition for allowance. Should the examiners believe additional discussion would advance prosecution, they are invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Matthew Stavish", is written over a horizontal line.

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